

Remarks

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected. Claims 3-9 are objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 10-20 are allowed. By this response, claims 1 and 4-9 have been amended and claim 3 has been canceled. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of all pending claims herein.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Natsume, et al. (U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0100240). The Examiner stated that Natsume discloses various elements corresponding to the limitations of Applicants' structure recited in independent claim 1 and dependent claim 2, citing Fig. 5 of Natsume.

Because Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 3, Applicants

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3-9, stating that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, Applicants have canceled claim 3 and amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 3, therefore claim 1 is allowable as is claim 2, which depends from claim 1 as amended. Claims 4-9 have been amended to depend from claim 1 and are likewise in condition for allowance. Therefore the Examiner's objections have been overcome and claims 1-9 are in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Made of Record

The prior art made of record by the Examiner and not relied upon, i.e. Erisman, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,879,136); and Tateshi, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,469,481), have been reviewed and Applicants respectfully submit that the references cited do not anticipate or suggest the elements of pending independent claims.

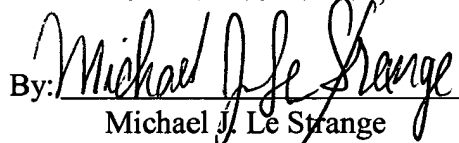
Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted the application may be passed to issuance.

The Examiner is urged to call the undersigned at the number listed below if, in the Examiner's opinion, such a phone conference would aid in furthering the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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